



FULTON COUNTY 2020 PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE AGENDA
Department of External Affairs - November 20, 2019



- SUPPORT LONG-TERM TRANSIT FUNDING AND REPRESENTATION IN GOVERNANCE**
- ENSURE AUTONOMY FOR FULTON COUNTY AIRPORT**
- CREATE EQUITY IN APPEALS PROCESS FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS**
- PROTECT LEGACY HOMEOWNERS IN GENTRIFYING NEIGHBORHOODS**
- REQUEST ONGOING FUNDING FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**
- PROTECT AIR QUALITY**
- IMPROVE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION PROCESS**
- ENSURE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE TRANSPARENCY**
- CREATE MORE EFFICIENT JUSTICE SYSTEM**



**FULTON
COUNTY**

2020 Proposed
State Legislative
Agenda

**ENSURE SECURE
ELECTIONS & FUNDING FOR EXPENSES**

**SUPPORT
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES**

**SUPPORT
HOMEOWNER PROTECTIONS**

**GREATER TRANSPARENCY
FOR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY ACTIONS**



**FULTON
COUNTY**

2020 Proposed
State Legislative
Agenda

SUPPORT LONG-TERM TRANSIT FUNDING AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

- As the largest county in Georgia and the economic center of the state, Fulton County is the heart of Georgia's transit system, and has provided financial support for transit for more than 40 years.
- **Fulton County supports designated elective representation and appointment authority for transit boards, as applicable, to ensure the interests of the citizens and businesses in Fulton County.**
- Fulton County continues its support for long-term financing tools to help local governments address their transit capital and operational needs to ensure appropriate integration and equitable connectivity.
- **Fulton County requests that the State of Georgia provide ongoing allocated funding for transit.**

ENSURE ONGOING AUTONOMY FOR FULTON COUNTY AIRPORT

- Fulton County seeks local legislation to ensure the ongoing autonomy of Fulton County Airport parcels currently in unincorporated Fulton County.

CREATE GREATER EQUITY IN APPEALS PROCESS FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

Fulton County proposes changes in the appeals process for assessments of commercial properties. Proposed changes include:

- Requiring mandatory reporting of all income and expenses associated with the commercial property at the time an appeal is filed.
- Amendment of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-299 (c) to clearly Define “significant / material” change in existing law to include includes changes in income, vacancy and cap rates.
- Updating appeals forms for commercial properties to require declaration of recent fee appraisals.
- Limiting appeal rights on Development Authority parcels during all or part of the 10-year “ramp up” period.

PROTECT LEGACY HOMEOWNERS IN GENTRIFYING NEIGHBORHOODS

- Fulton County seeks tax policies that would protect legacy/longtime homeowners against unmitigated tax increases in gentrifying neighborhoods.
- **Specifically, Fulton County seeks to amend the definition of Residential Transitional Property in O.C.G.A. § 48-5-7.4 (c) as “an unrenovated home is affected by a change in conditions such as a neighborhood where at least one-third of the homes have undergone new construction and substantial renovation, and the neighborhood is experiencing revitalization in the areas of desirability and price point.”**

STRENGTHEN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH MODEL & FUNDING FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION

- Fulton County seeks to ensure ongoing state funding for core behavioral health services for individuals in permanent supportive housing.
- Fulton County also seeks to ensure a strong network of providers to meet the behavioral health needs of uninsured and underinsured residents.
- Fulton County supports policies and more funding to create greater capacity related to opioid and addiction prevention, treatment and recovery programs.

PROTECT AIR QUALITY

Fulton County supports stronger protections for air quality including:

- stricter zoning provisions and greater reporting requirements for businesses that emit harmful chemicals, including ethylene oxide and others;
- Stronger requirements and processes for state regulatory agencies to report air quality issues to the public.

IMPROVE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION PROCESS

- Fulton County supports an efficient, fair and timely appeals process for taxpayers. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. Title 48 regarding county boards of equalization, review of assessments and citizen appeals, Fulton County proposes an opt-in opportunity for e-notification to taxpayers appealing their hearings.
- If the taxpayer chooses to exercise the one-time change of date/time of their scheduled hearing as allowed under statute, Fulton County requests that the rescheduled hearing be held in a time period that does not exceed 90 days beyond the initial appeals hearing date unless there are other extenuating circumstances including military service.

SIMPLIFY HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION PROCESS

- Fulton County seeks opportunities to simplify the homestead exemption process to improve outcomes for taxpayers.
- Fulton County supports property owner education programs to assist property owners with understanding their rights and responsibilities in the property tax process, including homestead exemptions, appeals, and more.

CREATE A MORE EFFICIENT JUSTICE SYSTEM

- Fulton County supports legislation that creates a more efficient justice system and improves outcomes for victims, defendants and taxpayers.

ENSURE SECURE ELECTIONS

- Fulton County is committed to providing secure elections in compliance with state law and **requests additional state funding for the implementation of new voting machines and associated costs borne by County governments in conducting elections.**
- Fulton County supports efforts to maintain and expand early voting opportunities.

SUPPORT CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

- Fulton County supports legislation that continues incentives that support job creation and business opportunity through creative industries, including film and television, fashion, music and gaming.

SUPPORT EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE TRANSPARENCY

- Fulton County supports improvements in emergency medical services. Fulton County specifically supports HB 264, introduced in 2019, which includes provisions to ensure that EMS vendors cannot serve on committees that select EMS service providers.

SUPPORT HOMEOWNER PROTECTIONS

- Fulton County seeks changes to O.C.G.A. Title 44 to provide for Community Associations Protection and Transparency to include specific requirements for governance, financial management, and business best practices for homeowner associations, and protections for individual property owners.
- Fulton County supports HR 329 introduced in 2019 which would create the House Study Committee on Homeowners' Associations, Condominium Owners' Associations, and Property Owners in Community Associations.

Improve Transparency for the Fulton County Development Authority

Fulton County seeks to enhance transparency of the Fulton County Development Authority by requiring more specific reporting including public posting of:

- Tallies of votes;
- Detailed meeting agendas, with background documents;
- Detailed meeting minutes.

IMPORTANT DATES

- November 15, 2019 – First Day to Pre-file 2020 Legislation
- January 13, 2020 – Georgia General Assembly Begins Legislative Session